LEPERMAN

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Summary: The first installment in the ongoing(?) series of the

world's only crime-fighting leper.

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In the slums of Bourbon City there were many bands of men, all attached by common ailments or circumstances: The drunks, the psychos, the druggies, the cripples. Some were shown pity, and others were shunned by the upper class. But all men who lived there, both vulgar and polite alike, showed nothing but hatred for the mangy lepers.

In fact, there was only one leper in Bourbon City. He was known only as "Leperman". Many citizens joked that he could throw chunks of his body over tall buildings in a single toss, and hobble on one leg faster than a speeding pigeon. But most of these people had never seen Leperman, nor did they want to. He was the city's official boogeyman. Hardly anyone even believed he existed at all. After all, wasn't leprecy a dead illness? Still, they were wary, for the thought of leprecy brought up the most gripping of images. It could be contagious, and it could cause death. For this reason, whenever anyone in the city brought up the name "Leperman", it was met by both humor and fear.

Leperman hid in the darkest corridors of the city, in the heart of the ghettos. He did not want to be seen, nor did he have a reason to come out in the day. He prefered to wait until the moon rose and a thick cloud of smog washed over the grimy, slime-smudged city. During the daytime he spent his days hiding in assorted dumpsters. Often he would move around a lot, so as not to be noticed by their owners. He wore a large hood that covered most of his face and a thick, dark cloak. Covering his body were baggy pants and a shirt with small foxtails pinned to it. Wrapped around his hands were bandages, for his fingers would often crumble and needed to be held in place.

Despite all this, he had insane delusions that he was a superhero. Always he waited for an opportunity to strike out and fight criminals, and on one night he was to do just that.

On that night Leperman shambled over to a trashbin and began scrounging about for food. As he was doing this he brought his hood up a little so he could get a better view of his surroundings. Right when he was about to gnaw into a tasty piece of moldy chicken, he heard a piercing shriek from behind him. Wheeling around he saw a large barrel-chested man holding a woman against a wall. He had a rough face, a face you could light a match with. His bushy eyebrow wriggled on his wrinkling forehead like a caterpillar. And from between his eyes branched out the fattest, most squashed-up nose Leperman had ever seen. It was from this part of his anatomy that this thug got his name.

"Give Pug Nose money, bitch!" he shouted in a hoarse tone. "Give Pug Nose cash and Pug Nose won't have to make you pay another way!" The woman Pug Nose was holding only blubbered and rambled off in Spanish. She could not understand what he was saying. All she knew was that a huge thug was holding her at gunpoint. He backhanded her and large tears began to roll down her protruding cheekbones. As he throttled her, Leperman jumped out of the trashcan and shouted at him to release her. The brute looked at him and began laughing. Cocking his magnum, he fired three rounds at Leperman, who ducked behind more debris.

Pug Nose charged into the spot where Leperman had dissapeared and began heaving trash and throwing it around like a maniac. Leperman jumped out from behind him and clung to his shoulders, sinking his sharp teeth deep into Pug Nose's meaty neck. The behemoth howled and tossed him over his shoulder in a judo throw. Leperman screamed as Pug Nose kicked him in the swell of his back, knocking him face first into a wall. With a thundering bellow, Pug Nose charged into the wall, but Leperman rolled out of the way and Pug Nose crashed into it with a thud. As he ambled about dizzily, Leperman decided to utilize his superpower. Using all of his strength he pulled on his leg, ripping it off at the hip.

Black blood trickled down to the ground but Leperman was not worried. His massive healing abilities allowed him to be able to reattach any appendage he had ripped off his body, after it had fallen off. In this way he was truly stronger than the average leper. Hopping over to Pug Nose, he swung the bony appendage with all of his might, braining the goliath on the back of the head. Pug Nose snorted out a large glob of bloody snot from his enormous nostrils, took one step, and fell down in a coma.

Leperman laughed as he observed his unconsious foe. As he carefully reattached his leg, he limped over to the woman. She had been trapped in the corner during the entire confrontation. "I AM LEPERMAN, THE WORLD'S STRONGEST LEPER!" he shouted mightily to her. She took one look at him and screamed. "Tu es un diablo!" the woman squealed again and again hysterically. She ran out of the alley at a feverish pace. Leperman only stared at her as she ran away.

'You are a devil...'

Leperman looked down at his bandaged hands and contemplated this for a moment. Slowly he stumbled over to the broken hubcap of a car and

stared at his reflection in it. After a moment, a moment that reminded him of what he looked like, he agreed with her. He was a freak. Solemnly he shuffled over to the body of Pug Nose and tied him up with a thick strand of rope. Then he began to drag him to the police station. The bag of coke in his pocket would be all the incriminating evidence they would need. He would leave Pug Nose there for the cops to pick up on the steps. Then he would dissapear in the shadows of the ghettos.

For he was a superhero, but he was a devil all the same, and no one would believe that he had taken the criminal in if he had told them himself. They would be too busy running.

End file.